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# Implementing the Base Code with Smallholders

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# Flamingo Holdings

- Large fresh pre-packed vegetable and flower company
- Over 10 000 staff worldwide mostly on our own Kenyan Farms
- Over 3000 smallholders worldwide in Kenya, Guatemala, Peru and Thailand.
- Joined the ETI in February 2004
- Came into the Smallholder project around halfway through

## The Flamingo smallholder position

- Flamingo smallholders had proved that they were able to meet and often exceed all of the major technical and quality agricultural standards
- The smallholders were able to take the technical standards and embed them in their agricultural practices as a learning experience.
- As entrepreneurs as well as farmers the smallholders were very aware that to join the export market they had to meet and maintain these standards

# The big challenge for Flamingo

- Would we be able to communicate a social code of practice to our smallholders?
  - More nebulous than a technical standard
  - Harder to communicate
  - Harder to monitor
  - No definitive certification
- Could we raise awareness of these issues with workers without raising expectation of delivery over which we have very little control?

## The learning so far

- The issues of poor labour practices are generally the same at micro farm level as they are at macro farm level.
- Many of the issues are related to lack of respect and historical lack of care for transitional workers than institutional abuse
- Many of the more complex issues within the ETI base code like “freedom of association” are hard to communicate to a smallholder and his brother.
- This is going to be a long process

## Next steps for Flamingo

- Take the guidelines and the toolkit and “localise” them
  - Make them relevant
  - Make them part of a long term development process
  - Embed them in the smallholder working practice in the same way as a technical requirement
- Look at ways that Flamingo can help and reward good labour practice in the same way that good agricultural practice gives access to export markets
- Revisit the ETI project in 1 year and share our experience

# Ethical Trading Initiative

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